

Chairs and Members of the Appropriations Committee

I am writing in support of the Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities because they fight for people who are unable to defend themselves, teach people how to maneuver through a monolithic bureaucratic system, help them learn how to advocate for themselves and give the community of people with disabilities an informational link to services and activities through out the state.

I first discovered the Office of Protection and Advocacy about ten years ago when I signed up for E-alerts and started to receive weekly Legislative Updates. Then, last year, when I decided to advocate for a Lyme disease prevention bill in Hartford, I reached out to Beth Leslie, one of the people who sends out the Legislative Updates, because I was struggling with health problems and needed assistance with streamlining the advocacy task in order to minimize the impact on my wellbeing. Her knowledge, consideration, and kindness greatly supported the efforts to reach out to you.

The Office of Protection and Advocacy provides a service that often goes unrecognized or unappreciated. Reducing funding will impact persons with disabilities at a time when they need someone to safeguard their rights the most. Please do not reduce funding to the Office of Protection and Advocacy.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

John Gentile  
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